

PugetSoundPartnership

our sound, our community, our chance

January 22, 2010

TO: Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council

FROM: Puget Sound Partnership Science Panel

SUBJECT: Recommendations Regarding the Science Panel's Roles in Supporting the Recovery of Puget Sound

Introduction

On January 11, 2010, the members of the Science Panel along with Mary Ruckelshaus, Scott Redman, and Tammy Owings participated in a daylong retreat facilitated by Margen Carlson, WDFW.

The purpose of the retreat was for the Science Panel to develop recommendations to provide to the Leadership Council concerning the Panel's role and work plan for 2010-11. The following is a summary of the Panel's recommendations developed during the retreat. After discussion with the Partnership's management team and Leadership Council, the Panel will continue to fill in gaps and develop its work plan.

Science Panel Roles and Activities

Three primary Science Panel roles emerged from our collective discussion of how to support a science-based, ecosystem focused recovery of Puget Sound. These roles reflect not only what a science panel of this caliber and breadth *can* deliver, but what it *should* deliver in order to achieve the science-based recovery that we all desire.

- **Review.** Design a process for internal (Science Panel) and external (facilitated by the Science Panel) peer review, and establish appropriate timelines for reviewing Partnership products (Action Agenda Updates; State of the Sound, Sound Science Updates; and where necessary PSP program components).
 - Referee Science Update review (first iteration in summer 2010)
 - Facilitate WA Academy of Science review of PSP (June 2011)
 - Review PSP commissioned studies
 - Other PSP products as requested

- **Integrate.** Continually integrate scientific information that identifies future desired states of the system, status of natural and human conditions, threats and drivers of system change, and effective strategies to protect and restore the system. Oversee continual development of the Science Update (SU) and contribute to the SU Synthesis and SU Policy Guidance documents.
 - Oversee continual development of the Science Update
 - Contribute to the Science Update Synthesis document
 - Contribute to Science Update Policy Guidance document
- **Advise.** Advise the Leadership Council on steps it can take to ensure that the protection and restoration program is science-based, incorporates an ecosystem-based perspective, and includes the necessary scientific components (e.g., monitoring, modeling, research) for meeting Partnership goals. Facilitate a WSAS peer review process of the scientific underpinnings of the Partnership. Advise and comment on Partnership legislative and budgetary initiatives/issues as requested.
 - Advise action agenda updates via cross program groups,
 - Partnership legislative and budgetary initiatives/issues as requested.
 - BSWP updates (science gaps, identify needs for increased capacity)

Each of the Science Panel activities that are specified in the Partnership's statute and identified in other guidance can be related to these roles.

Review

- Develop and implement an appropriate process for peer review of science activities
- Develop a competitive peer-reviewed process for soliciting, prioritizing, and funding research and modeling

Integrate

- Integrate regional science
- Continually update scientific knowledge relative to the 6 Puget Sound goals
- Ensure the Action Agenda is science based
- Develop environmental indicators and benchmarks

Advise

- Offer an ecosystem-wide perspective
- Provide input on the selection of performance management indicators
- Provide input on implementation strategies
- Address monitoring, modeling, data, management, and research
- Identify science gaps
- Recommend scientific research priorities

Assuring a Science Basis for PSP Processes and Products

Currently, the Partnership produces a number of products that would benefit from or require scientific peer review. However, these products are often completed by the Partnership on schedules that preclude meaningful review and improvement. This is particularly true for elements of the Performance Management System, the Action Agenda, and coordination of science activities across the region. Many of these elements will be informed via the first iteration of the Science Update and Science Synthesis documents due to be completed in December of 2010.

Over the short term (through December 2010), we recommend using the existing cross-Partnership work groups to help inform Partnership science/policy discussion. Science Panel members currently participate in these groups and, if these groups meet often enough and are imbued with the responsibility for providing substantive guidance to staff, Science Panel members can act as liaisons between the cross-Partnership groups and the full Science Panel.

Over the long term, we recommend closer coordination between the Science Panel and the Partnership staff who are responsible for planning and delivering processes and products. This would entail identifying timelines and deadlines for both Science Panel and Partnership processes and products, many of which occur at predictable times in each state fiscal year. Planning ahead in this way would allow us to synchronize the delivery of useful scientific products to other efforts, as well as accommodating appropriate involvement for the Science Panel.

For example, the Partnership is required to undergo programmatic review and assessment of the scientific underpinnings of the Partnerships' protection and restoration plan (In order to build a stronger program and accommodate Science Panel participation in this process, we recommend pushing the Washington State Academy of Sciences (WSAS) review of the Partnership back to June of 2011). The Science Panel could lead the Partnership in getting "ahead" of this review by writing a scope of work for WSAS review, communicating the process to the Leadership Council and others, delivering a package of Partnership materials to the WSAS that are complete and have received Science Panel review, and serving as the scientific liaisons between the Partnership and the WSAS reviewers.

In addition, the Science Panel recommends delaying the development of a next version of the biennial science work plan until 2011 – after the Puget Sound Science Update and synthesis are completed later in 2010. In the meantime, the Panel would anticipate using the 2009-11 biennial science work plan to guide the development of state budget proposals for 2011-13 and for guiding the allocation of federal funds for science activities in support of Puget Sound ecosystem recovery.

Summary

In summary, the Science Panel is requesting Leadership Council response to its proposed roles and work planning:

- Are there roles that the Leadership Council feels are missing
- Are there additional functions that the Council would like us to provide
- Is there additional guidance the Council would like to provide the Panel

The next meeting of the Science Panel is scheduled for February 9 & 10, 2010. The Panel would enjoy a longer discussion with the Leadership Council on the Science Panel's role and work plan on the morning of the 9th. Members of the Leadership Council along with Director Dicks and Deputy Director Ransley are invited to attend this discussion.

cc: David Dicks, Puget Sound Partnership Executive Director
Dave Somers, ECB Chair